

# Influenza Surveillance Report

Division of Disease Prevention and Control

*Public Health Informatics*

CDC MMWR Week 41:

October 6, 2019 to October 12, 2019

**Influenza Activity by County, State, and National Levels**

**Houston/ Harris County:**

**Texas:**

**CDC:**

Increased

## Highlights

- The Houston Health Department (HHD) conducts seasonal influenza surveillance from October (week 40) to May (week 22). In week 41, the percentage of reported influenza-like illnesses (ILI) detected in emergency centers in Houston/Harris County was **1.07%** which **increased** from the previous week. The flu vaccine is recommended for the entire season.

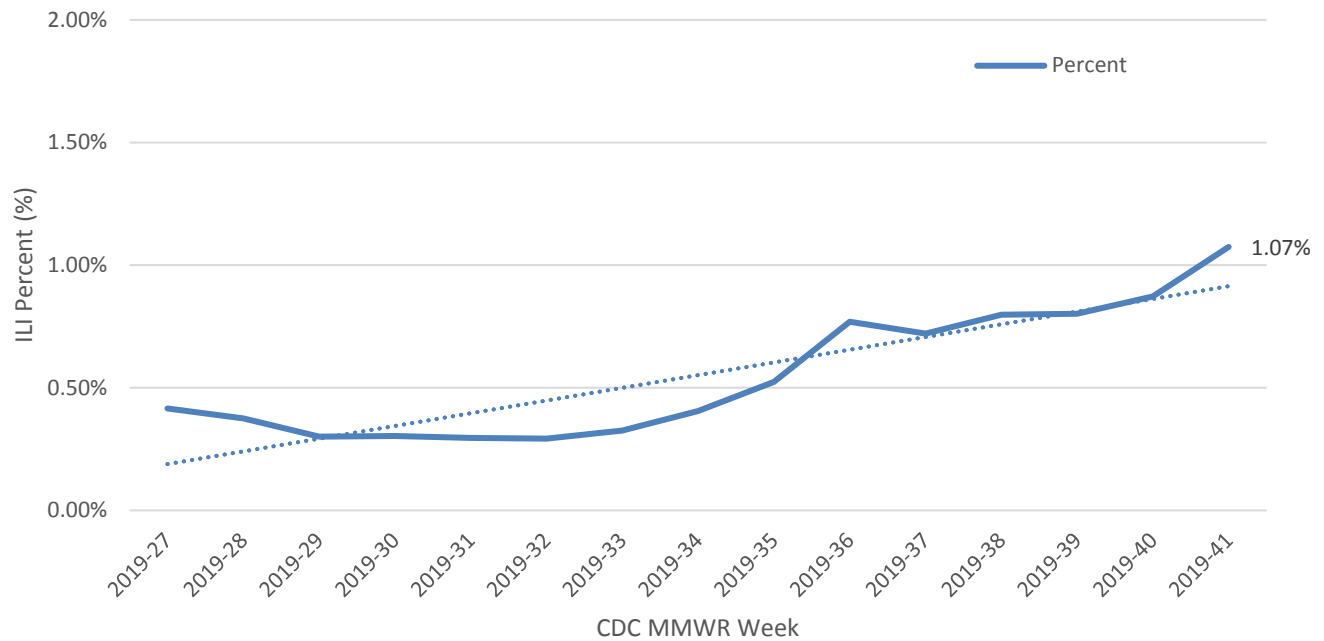
## Influenza Like Illness (ILI)

- The percentage of Athena ILI reports **decreased** to 0.13% in week 41 compared to the previous week.

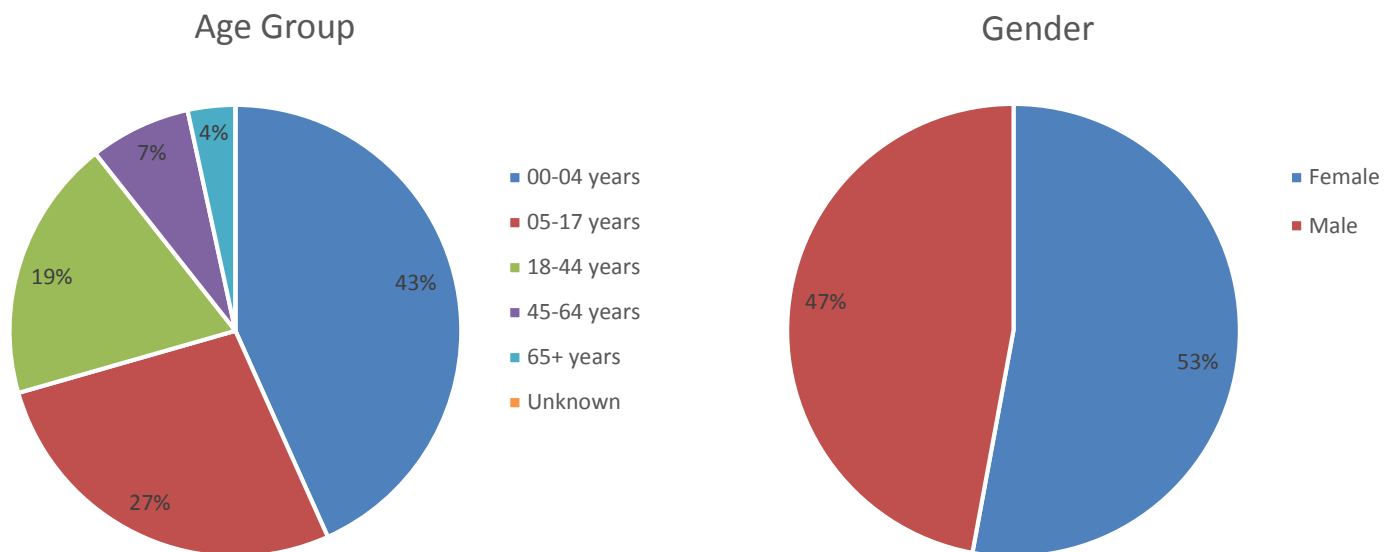
## Virology

- HHD receives electronic lab reports from clinical labs. During week 41, the volume of flu tests received remained comparable to the previous week. Flu A activity accounts for **97%** of the cumulative flu positives this season.

## Syndromic Surveillance: ILI activity trend in 2019-2020



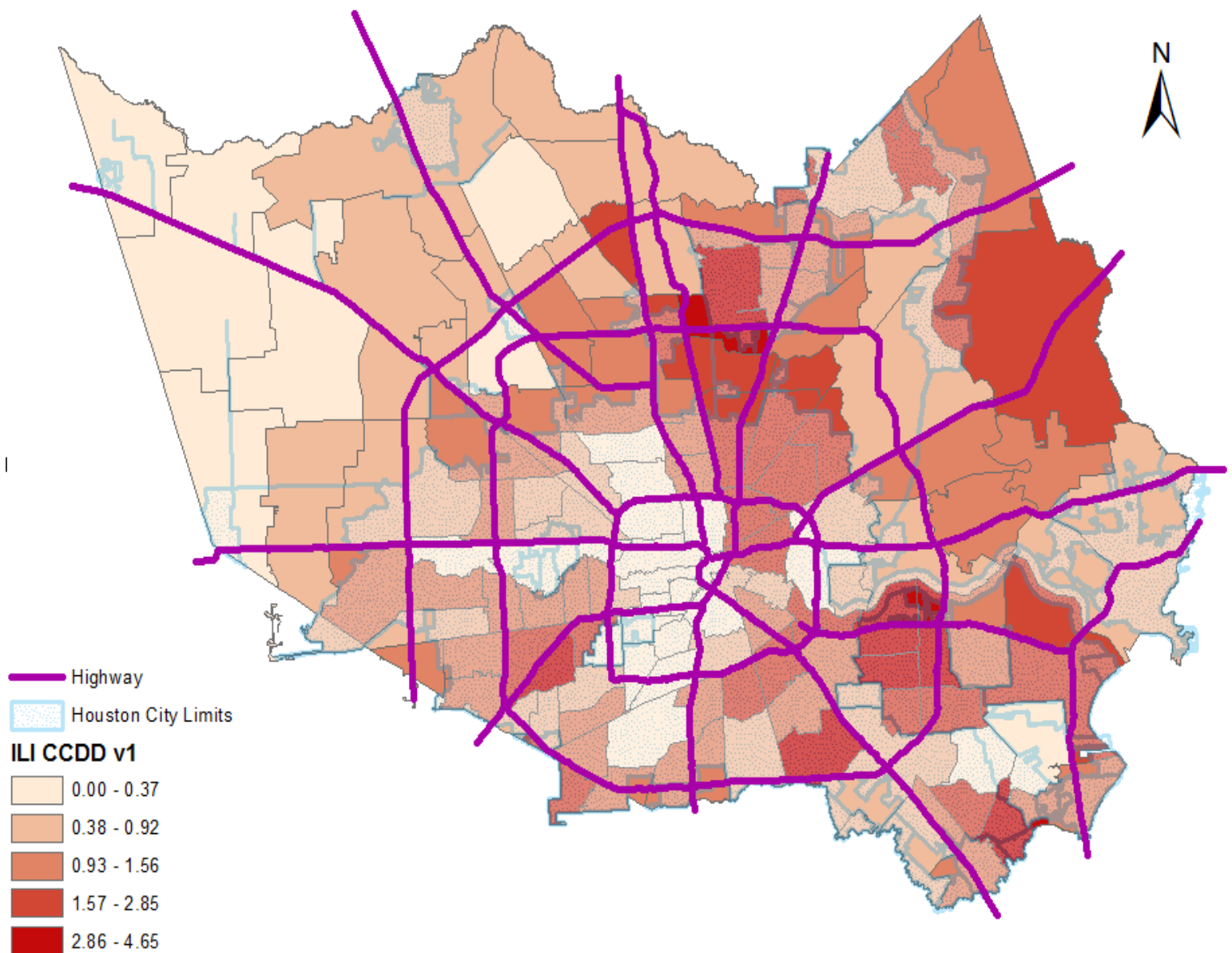
## Syndromic Surveillance: 2019-2020 Influenza Season Age and Gender Distribution



During week 41, 1.07% of emergency center (EC) visits were due to influenza-like illness (ILI) complaints. Of the 1617 patients presenting with ILI, the age group that recorded the most EC visits was the 00 to 04 years old (43%). Females accounted for 53% of patients presenting with ILI.

*NOTE: ILI activity is assessed using information provided by the Southeast Texas Syndromic Surveillance System and includes data from 77 hospitals and 17 school-based clinics. Influenza-like illness (ILI) is defined as the mention of fever AND cough, OR fever AND sore throat, OR flu in the patient's Emergency Department (ED) chief complaint. These data do not represent laboratory confirmed cases of influenza nor do they represent all ED visits in Houston/Harris County.*

## Syndromic Surveillance: Geographic Distribution Map of ILI



During week 41, the zip codes with the highest percent of ED visits (2.48 or greater) were:

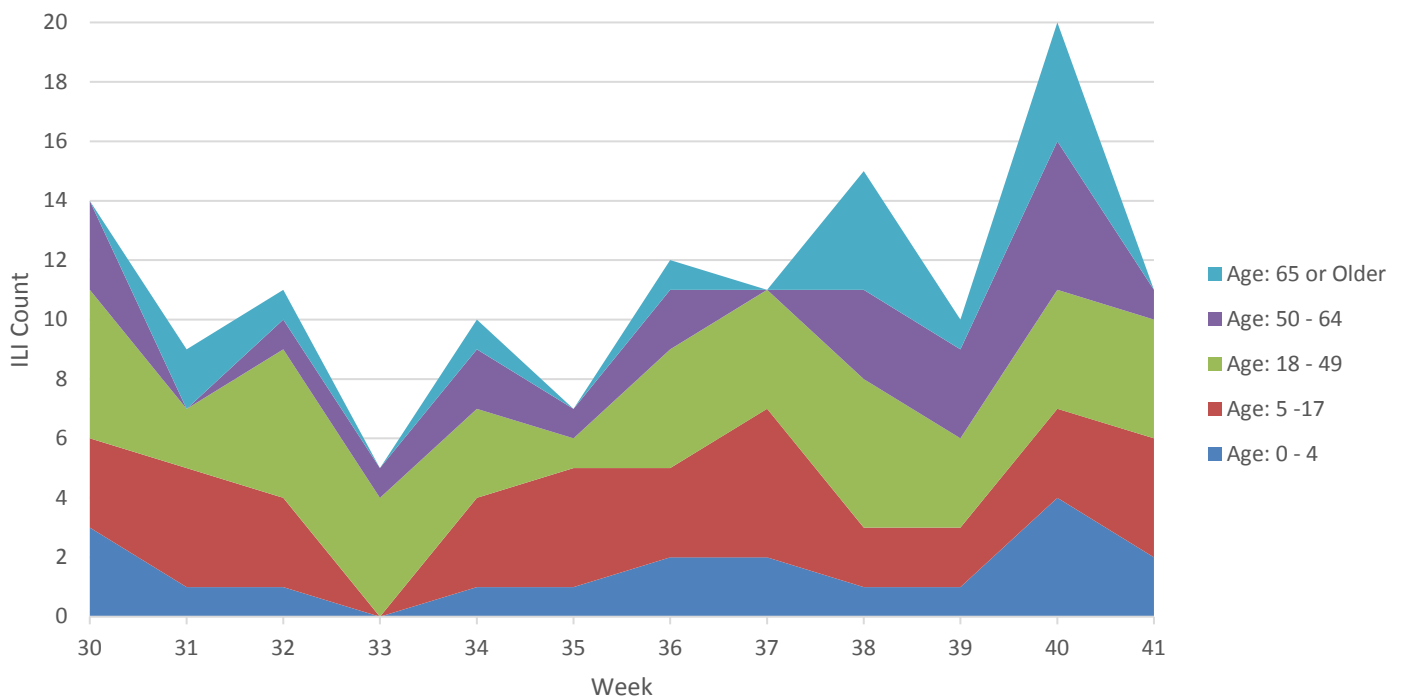
77016, 77505, 77033, 77058, 77075, 77502, 77074, 77506, 77503, and 77032.

*NOTE: Houston/Harris County ILI report distribution map was created using data provided by the Southeast Texas Syndromic Surveillance System and includes data from 77 hospitals and 17 school-based clinics. This map reflects the number of ILI cases from each residential zip code during the current week of reporting. Influenza-like illness (ILI) is defined as the mention of fever AND cough, OR fever AND sore throat, OR flu in the patient's ED chief complaint. These data do not represent laboratory confirmed cases of influenza nor do they represent all ED visits in Houston/Harris County.*

## Athena: ILI percentage per week from 2019-2020

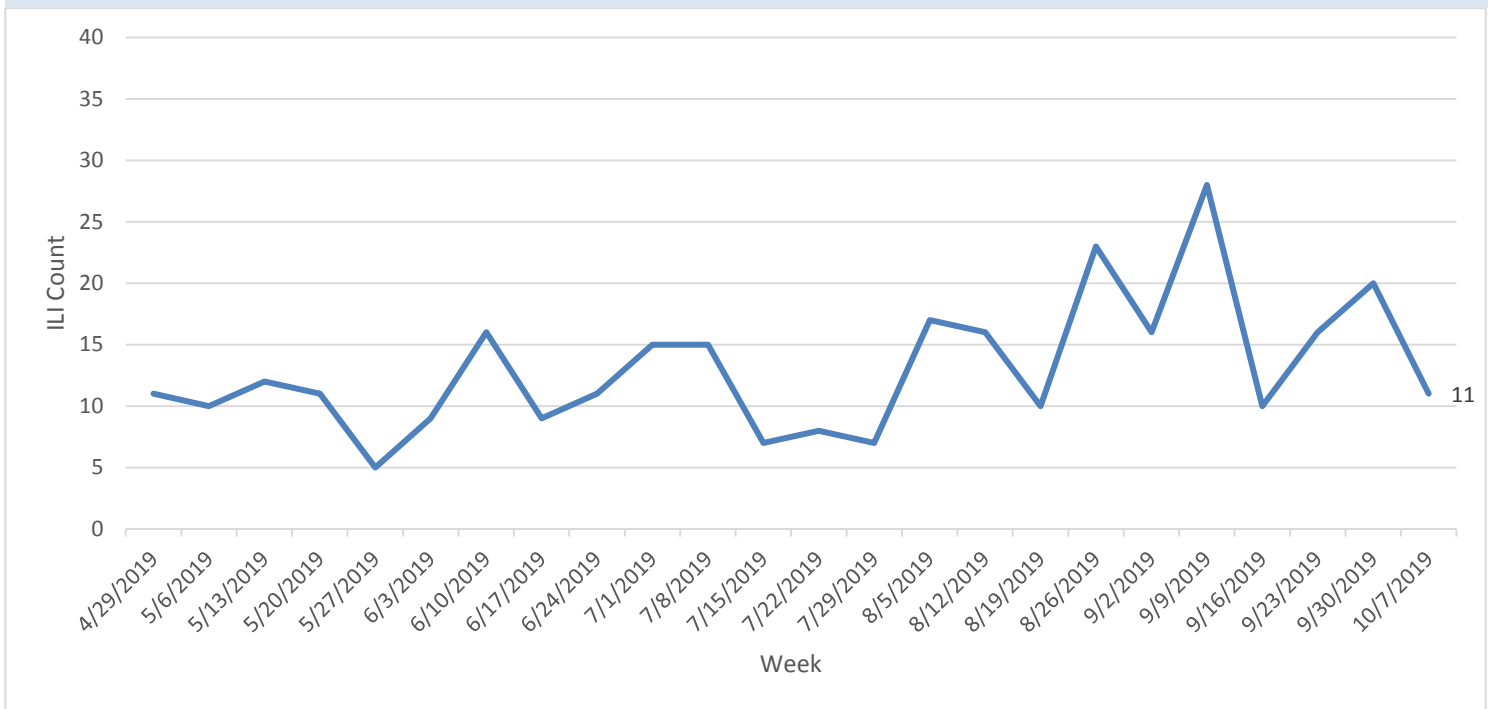


## Athena: ILI per week by age group



In week 41, ILI accounted for 0.13% of outpatient visits in the Athena network. The total count of ILI visits reported within the network was 11.

## Flu Near You: ILI per week



Flu near You (FNY) is a participatory surveillance tool that compliments traditional disease surveillance. The count of Flu Near You ([flunearyou.org](http://flunearyou.org)) users reporting ILI in the week of 10/06/2019 decreased to 11 from the previous week. See the last page for information on how to participate.

## School Surveillance August 2019 - May 2020

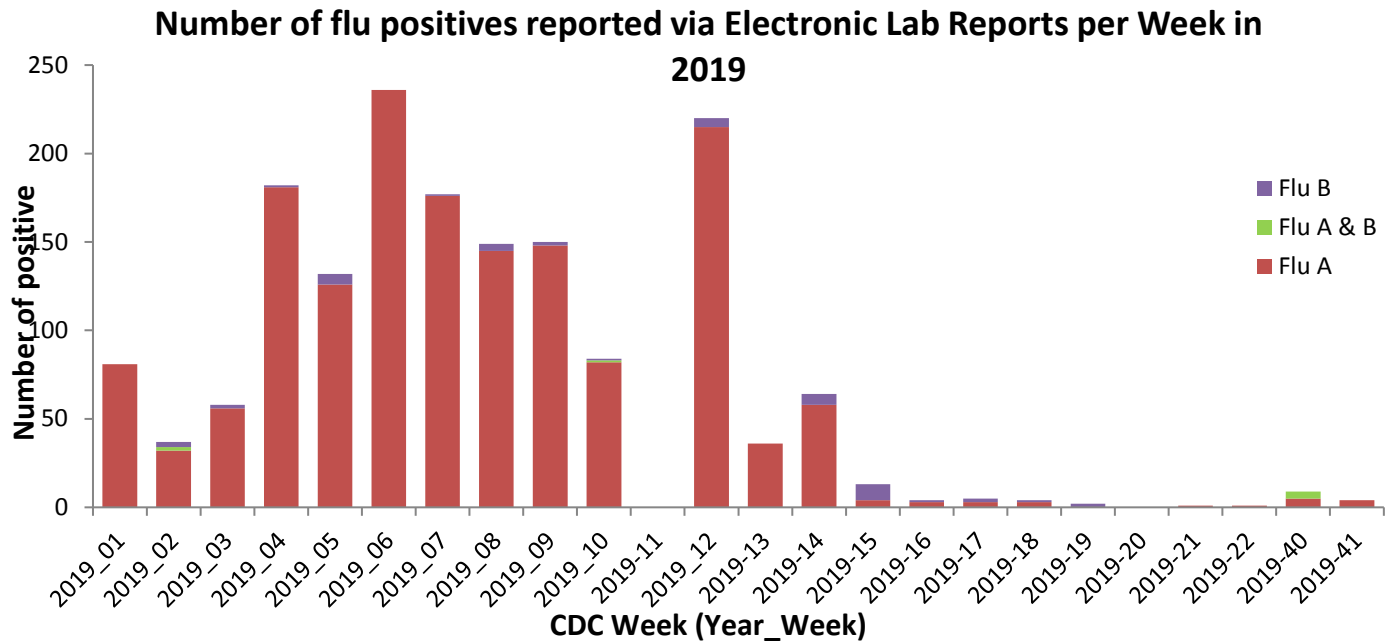
Table 1: ILI and Influenza Cases by Type and School Type<sup>1</sup> per Month

Month	Total Cases	Lab Confirmed		Flu A	Flu B	A+B	Unclassified	Elem Schools	Middle Schools	High Schools	Multi-level schools
<b>Aug</b>	1	1	100%	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
<b>Sep</b>	32	4	13%	0	0	0	4	18	2	12	0
<b>Oct</b>	96	21	22%	4	0	0	17	83	0	12	1
<b>Nov</b>											
<b>Dec</b>											
<b>Jan</b>											
<b>Feb</b>											
<b>Mar</b>											
<b>Apr</b>											
<b>May</b>											
<b>Sum</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>1</b>

School surveillance for ILI began in August for the current flu season. In October, a total of 96 cases were reported. The highest number of cases (83) were among elementary school students.

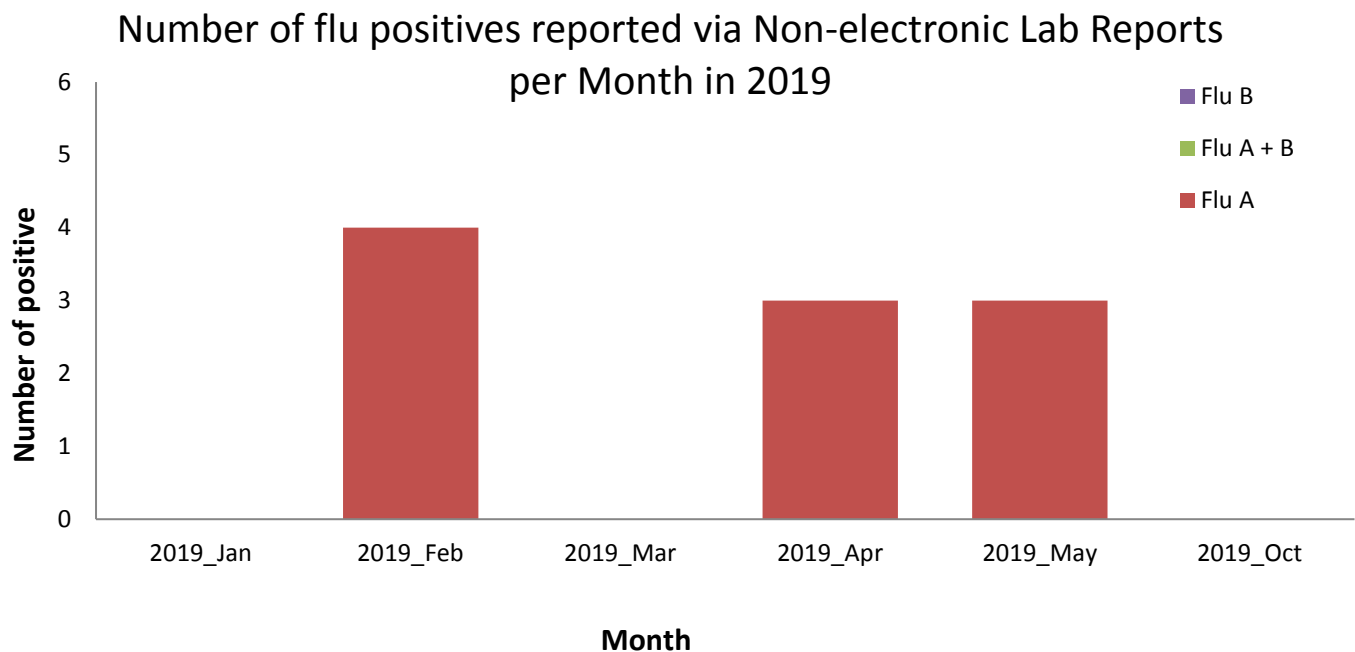
*NOTE: Data on student ILI and influenza cases is collected from 306 schools within Houston Independent school district.<sup>1</sup> School will be counted more than once if more than one case from the same school is reported during the same reporting period.*

## Passive Viral Surveillance, Electronic lab reports



HHD receives electronic lab reports from clinical laboratories. In Week 41 of 2019, there were 4 laboratory confirmed influenza cases\*\*\*.

## Passive Viral Surveillance, Nonelectronic lab reports



HHD received 0 nonelectronic lab reports of flu-positive results from clinical laboratories during this reporting period. February accounts for the highest counts (n=4) of Flu activity in 2019.

*The Houston Influenza Surveillance Weekly Report* is available on the Houston Health Department web site at:  
<https://www.houstontx.gov/health/Epidemiology>

Flu Near You is a participatory surveillance (crowd sourcing) tool which complements traditional disease surveillance activities. Registered users can obtain real-time information on flu activity and influenza vaccines in the Greater Houston Metropolitan Area. Flu Near You features include:

- Report symptoms
- Find vaccines
- Map flu cases in the Greater Houston Metropolitan area
- Get flu news
- Share on social media

This season HHD invites you to register for Flu Near You at <https://flunearyou.org>



**NOTE:**

*Influenza-like Illness (ILI) is defined as fever (temperature  $\geq 100^{\circ}\text{F}$ ) plus a cough OR a sore throat, in the absence of a known cause other than influenza.*

*Houston ILI baselines were determined using the same method as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Regional ILI baseline.*

*Data was obtained or accessed through the Southeast Texas Syndromic Surveillance System. However, any conclusions drawn from use of this data do not represent the official views of any consortium member jurisdiction.*

*Additional information regarding Houston, Texas and national ILI activity can be accessed at:*

<http://www.houstontx.gov/health/>  
<http://www.dshs.texas.gov/IDCU/disease/influenza/surveillance/2019.aspx>  
<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/>  
<http://www.who.int/csr/don/en/>

*\*Below baseline means the % of visits for ILI is below the region-specific baseline of 4.0%.*

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/overview.htm>

*® The numbers for pediatric flu-related deaths may change as information becomes available.*

*\*\* Flu-related deaths in adults are not required to be reported to the health department. Numbers for flu-related deaths may change as information becomes available.*

*\*\*\* During MMWR week 11, electronic laboratory reporting (ELR) was interrupted due to system outage.*

## Houston Health Department

Division of Disease Prevention and Control

Public Health Informatics

8000 N. Stadium Dr., 4th Floor Houston, TX  
 77054

**Main Phone Number: (832) 393-5080**  
**Disease Reporting Fax Number: (832) 393-5232**